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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/611,864	07/03/2003	Alfred Annecke	111427-00599/AT02014	3851

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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, PHUONGCHI T

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2833

DATE MAILED: 09/20/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/611,864

Applicant(s)

ANNECKE, ALFRED

Examiner

Phuongchi Nguyen

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 and 17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 16 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

☒ Attachment 1

DETAILED ACTION

1. Applicant's amendment of July 8, 2004 is acknowledged. It is noted that the specification and claims 1, 6, 9 are amended. Claim 11 is canceled. New claims 15-17 are added.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 1-10, 12-15 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Little et al (US6435894B2).

In regarding to claim 1, Little et al discloses an electrical plug connector (figures 1 and 2), in particular for use between a receptacle (igniter) and an electrical control device for a restraint system in motor vehicles, comprising a housing (12) having a housing body (of 12) and a trunk (54) projecting therefrom for receiving electrically connected contact elements (16, 18) for the purpose of contacting corresponding contact parts (32, 34) of the receptacle (26); (flexible) catch arms (50, 52) with spring effect on the trunk (54) for fixing the housing (12) in corresponding recesses (30) of the receptacle (26), the catch arms (50, 52) are joined at the end (54a) of the trunk (54) and from there pass, at a distance from the trunk (54), in the direction forward the housing body (of 12); and a locking element (14) that can be plugged onto the housing (12), the locking element (14) comprises spring-acting locking arms (140, 142) for making fast (by snapping) to the housing (12), wherein the locking element (14) is used to release the plug connector (10) from a locking position (as shown in figure 2B) with respect to the receptacle (26); (as seen in figures 1-3 of Applicant's invention, the locking element 20 used to release the plug connector 10 from a locking position (as shown in figure 2) with respect to

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the receptacle 50 has the same characteristic with the locking element 14 of Little et al.

Therefore, the locking element of Little et al will work the same way as the locking element of Applicant).

In regarding to claim 2, Little et al discloses (figure 1) the plug connector in which the locking arms (140, 142) of the locking element (14) project out from a base portion (132).

In regarding to claim 3, Little et al discloses the plug connector in which the base portion (132) is configured as a kind of frame (since Applicant's base portion 22g is a top bar side view as shown in figure 1; therefore, Little et al 's the base portion 132 is also configured as a frame).

In regarding to claim 4, Little et al discloses (figure 1) the plug connector in which the locking arms (140, 142) of the locking element (14), in plugged condition of the locking element, extend into the areas (slots formed by arms 50, 52 on the opposite end of the end 54a) of the catch arms (50, 52) of the housing (12).

In regarding to claim 5, Little et al discloses (figure 1) the plug connector in which the locking arms (140, 142) of the locking element (14) are movable along slots (A, B) (Attachment 1) that are formed in the catch arms (50, 52).

In regarding to claim 6, Little et al discloses (figure 1) the plug connector in which the catch arms (50, 52) in the locked position of the plug connector and receptacle is located parallel to the trunk (54).

In regarding to claim 7, Little et al discloses (figures 1 and 2) the plug connector in which the catch arms (50, 52) and the locking arm (140, 142) are configured such that in the locking position of plug connector (10) and receptacle (26) are made fast (by snapping) in the same recesses (30) of the receptacle (26).

In regarding to claim 8, Little et al discloses (figure 1) the plug connector in which catch means (64) of catch arms (50, 52) are arranged in an area of the catch arms (50, 52) which is

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adjacent to an area (closed to the trunk end 54a) at which the catch arms (50, 52) are joined to a trunk end (54a).

In regarding to claim 9, Little et al discloses (figure 1) the plug connector in which catch means (144, 146) of the locking arms (140, 142) arranged in a free end area of the locking arms (140, 142).

In regarding to claim 10, Little et al discloses (figures 1 and 2) the plug connector in which the locking element (14) in its complete plug position with respect to the housing (12) can be plugged with the housing (12) onto the receptacle (26).

In regarding to claim 12, Little et al discloses (figures 1 and 2) the plug connector in which the locking element (14) can be shifted in relation to the housing (12) in the axial direction of the trunk (54) (after the locking element 14 is locked onto the housing 12, the locking element 14 and the housing 12 can be shifted in the axial direction of the trunk 54).

In regarding to claim 13, Little et al discloses (figures 1 and 2) the plug connector in which the locking element (14) be shifted along a path (formed by arms 50, 52 and trunk 54) that is specified by a window (142a) formed in the locking element (14).

In regarding to claim 14, Little et al discloses (figures 1 and 2) the plug connector in which the catch arms (50, 52), in the locking position of housing (12) and receptacle (26), engage with their free ends in openings (142a) which are formed in the locking element (14).

In regarding to claim 15, Little et al discloses (figures 1 and 2) the plug connector wherein only the locking element (14) is actuated to release (the protrusion 62, 64 of) the catch arm (50, 52) from the recesses (30) of the receptacle (26) (when the protrusion 62, 64 passing the top edges of the housing 28 of the receptacle 26 in the locking position, as seen in figure 2E).

In regarding to claim 17, Little et al discloses the plug connector wherein the locking element(14) engages the recesses (30) of the receptacle (26) when the plug connector is in the locking position (figure 2C).

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claim 16 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

5. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: the prior art fail to teaches the plug connector wherein deflecting the locking arms simultaneously deflected the catch arms as claimed.

Argument

6. Applicant argues that “Little et al fails to show a locking element that releases the plug connector” is not deemed persuasive. Little et al does have the locking element (14) is used to release the plug connector (10) from a locking position (as shown in figure 2B) with respect to the receptacle (26). Similar to Applicant’s invention in Figs. 1-3, the locking element 20 used to release the plug connector 10 from a locking position (as shown in figure 2 and page 7, lines 13-14) with respect to the receptacle 50 has the same characteristic with the locking element 14 of Little et al. Thus, the locking element of Little et al will work the same way as the locking element of Applicant).

7. Applicant argues that “the area between latch arms 50 and 52 and shaft 54 of Little et al are not slots formed in the latch arms 50 and 52, as recited in claim 5” is not deemed persuasive; Little et al has (figure 1) the locking arms (140, 142) of the locking element (14) are movable along slots (A, B) (Attachment 1) that are formed in the catch arms (50, 52).

Conclusion

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THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).


A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Phuongchi Nguyen whose telephone number is (571) 272-2012. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00AM-4:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paula Bradley can be reached on (571) 272-2800 ext 33. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

PCN September 7, 2004


ROSS GUSHI
PRIMARY EXAMINER